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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

F-16 fighter aircraft mark 20 year history in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. – January 1, 2012 will mark more than the start of a new year for the South Dakota Air National Guard. It will also mark the twentieth anniversary of the 114th Fighter Wing's official conversion to flying the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

The F-16 is the seventh single engine fighter aircraft that has been flown by the South Dakota Air National Guard during its 65 year history:

- North American F-51 Mustang, 1946 – 1954
- Lockheed F-94 Starfire, 1954 – 1958
- Northrop F-89 Scorpion, 1958 – 1961
- Convair F-102 Delta Dagger, 1961 – 1970
- North American F-100 Super Sabre, 1970 – 1977
- Vought A-7 Corsair II, 1977 – 1991
- General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon, 1992 to present

The 114th Fighter Wing flew Block 30 F-16 fighters for over 18 years. The unit was selected for conversion to enhanced Block 40 F-16 fighters during 2010. The newer Block 40 F-16s provide significant contributions to the unit's combat mission allowing it to deploy worldwide and execute tactical fighter sorties. Ongoing structural and system upgrades will ensure that the 22 assigned F-16 fighters remain fully combat capable for many years into the future.

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